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For three years (including 1968-69), remedial English has been taught at Golden West College (California) to groups of 200-365 students. Follow-up studies, begun with the opening of the College, have indicated that the student who completes the remedial program and proceeds to freshman composition has a better chance of success (C or better) than the initially qualified student who was not required to enroll in remedial courses. Two main problems were faced: (1) 60-70% of the entering freshmen require remedial English; (2) most instructors are prepared to teach only literature and have little interest in composition and grammar. Only enthusiastic and qualified teachers, therefore, are selected to offset the hostility and/or indifference of the students and the difficulties of large-group instruction. Course content and objectives are carefully defined. An intense schedule--daily classes for a 9-week term--is recommended for reinforcement. Details of the College programs in Basic English Review and Basic Writing Review are given, including schedule, class size, teaching methods, testing and grading, statistical results, workload credit for the staff, and distribution of students from large to small groups. The College uses a test of its own making (rather than ACT or SCAT) and plans to adopt an audio-tutorial system in Fall 1969. This system will not require additional staff as it can be supervised by a full-time, paraprofessional tutor. (HH)

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GOLDEN WEST COLLEGE

LARGE-GROUP INSTRUCTION IN REMEDIAL ENGLISH

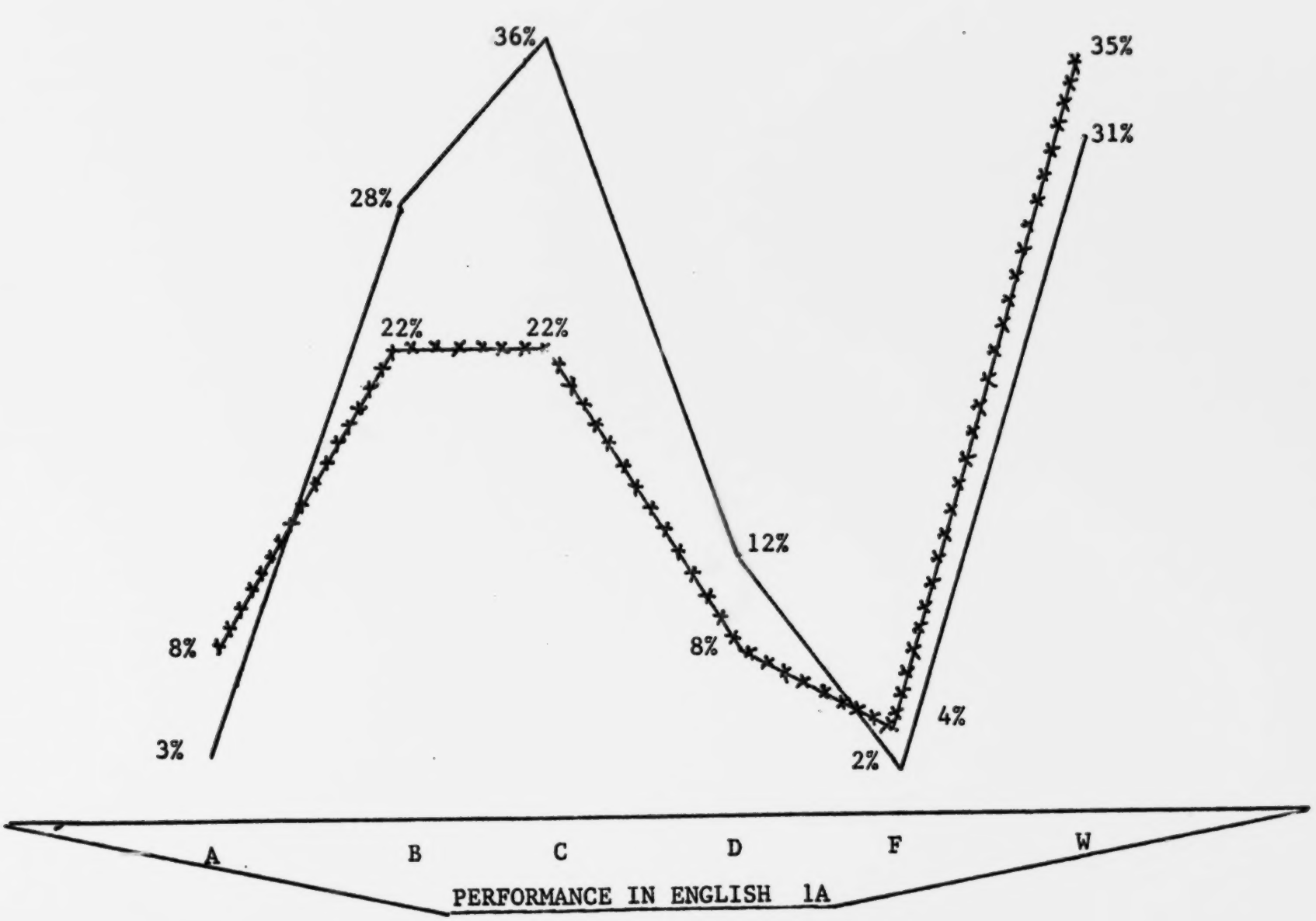
For three years (including the current 1968-69), remedial English has been taught to groups of 200-365 students. Follow-up studies begun with the opening of the college have indicated that the student who completes the remedial program at Golden West and proceeds to freshman composition (English 1A) has a better chance of success (C or better grade) in English 1A than has the initially qualified student who was not required to enroll in remedial courses.

POST-REMEDIAL STUDENTS

352 (fall '66 thru' fall '67)
Verbal-ability scores 0-6
(on 10-point ranking scale
for SCAT/ACT tests)

INITIALLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS

85 (spring semester '68)
Verbal-ability scores 7-10
(on 10-point ranking scale
for SCAT/ACT tests)



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I. REMEDIAL ENGLISH IN THE JUNIOR COLLEGE

Approximately 60-70% of entering junior college freshmen require remediation in English regardless of what placement test is used (SCAT, ACT, English Coop, Purdue). Staffing of remedial English becomes an immediate problem because of the large numbers of students requiring remedial help. The staffing problem is further compounded because too few English instructors are either interested in or prepared to teach remedial English. Students receive short shrift at the hands of incompetent or disinterested teachers. Junior colleges face the following facts:

A. The majority (approximately 80%) of our entering freshmen express intention to transfer to a four-year college. (Only about 1/4 to 1/3 actually do transfer.)

B. English skills (reading, writing) are essential to success in college. It is highly probable that the majority of those who drop out of college are not efficient readers and writers.

C. The majority of English instructors are educated to teach literature, not composition or grammar/linguistics.

D. The freshman composition course must parallel in content and standards freshman composition at state colleges or universities.

II. REMEDIAL ENGLISH AT GOLDEN WEST COLLEGE -- PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

A. Selection of Teachers

Only those instructors who are interested and educationally prepared should be assigned to remedial English. The remedial student is notoriously disinterested, even hostile; if his disinterest is combined with instructor disinterest, the compound is bound to kill the effectiveness of the program. If remedial English is taught only by qualified, enthusiastic teachers, the effectiveness of the teaching may off-set the disadvantages of large-group instruction.

B. Course Content and Large-group Instruction

If a composition student is expected to correct errors in his writing, and if freshman composition does not include the teaching of grammar/linguistics or spelling, then the writer must be assumed to know what the instructor means when he identifies such errors as sentence fragments, subject-verb disagreement, faulty pronoun reference, dangling modifiers, etc. The objectives of remedial English should therefore be to enable the remedial student to recognize errors in the standard patterns of English sentences, spelling and punctuation. Such content can be taught objectively, without writing and in large groups.

C. Course Objectives

The objectives of a remedial program should be identical with the preliminary assumptions about a beginning freshman composition student. A freshman composition student must be assumed to know literacy errors when he sees them (grammar, spelling, punctuation) if he can be taught

principles of logic, rhetoric, library research, etc. Freshman composition cannot correct major literacy problems and teach writing competence simultaneously without jeopardizing the poor writer's chances for success.

D. Daily Schedule

Remedial English, like foreign languages and mathematics, should be taught on a daily basis. Daily reinforcement of principles of English is particularly necessary for those students unfamiliar with and hostile toward English instruction.

E. Nine-weeks Term

Maintaining the interest of remedial students for 18 weeks is difficult at best. High attrition is typical. Remedial English should be limited to nine weeks of intensified instruction.

III. GOLDEN WEST COLLEGE REMEDIAL PROGRAM

Two consecutive nine-weeks courses were instituted in the fall of 1966: English A and English B.

A. English A, Basic English Review (2 units)

1. Schedule: 9 weeks, 4 hours lecture per week (we recommend 5, however)

2. Class Size: 200-365

3. Teaching Methods

Lecture, using overhead projector and transparencies prepared in advance, in color.

4. Testing

No writing.

Quizes: unannounced, 20-25 points, 3-4 times per nine weeks session. Multiple-choice, IBM-scored.

Exams: announced, one 100-point mid-term exam, one 180-point comprehensive final exam. Multiple-choice, IBM-scored.

Students are given written study outlines in advance of each major exam. The outline indicates precisely what questions will be asked and indicates the actual multiple choices which will appear on the exam: e.g.,

25 questions: In the following sentences, identify the kind of sentence error which occurs.

A - Correctly punctuated complete sentence
B - Comma splice
C - Run-together sentences
D - Sentence fragment

5. Texts

Grammar Revisited (syllabus developed at GWC), with text explanations and 55 exercises, including correct answers.

Smith, Spelling by Principles (Appleton, 1966), a programed text.

6. Grading Standards

90% = A
80% = B
70% = C
60% = D
below 60% = No Credit (no F grades assigned)

Students must earn at least a C in course to qualify for English B. A and B grades are assigned on basis of total points earned on all quizes and exams. C grades are assigned on total points or on final exam points, whichever score is higher. If a student can score 70% on the comprehensive final exam, he receives a C for the course regardless of scores earned on previous exams. (This policy tends to reduce the drop-out rate since it gives the student a "second chance" without making him feel that his scores are hopeless early in the term.)

7. Statistics: English A Grades

Approximately 60% of students completing English A earn C's or better in English A.

Approximately 10-13% withdraw from English A (the lowest withdrawal rate in the college)

B. English B, Basic Writing Review (1 unit)

1. Schedule: 9 weeks, 2 hours lecture-lab per week

2. Class Size: 30

3. Teaching Methods

Lecture, reading, discussion, in-class and out-of-class paragraph writing.

4. Text

Glatthorn and Fleming, Models for Composition (Harcourt, 1967)

5. Grading Standards

Subjective evaluation of student writing (always emphasizing that the quality of student writing upon completion of English B should match the quality of student writing at the beginning of English 1A)

Students must earn at least a grade of C to qualify for freshman composition (English 1A).

C. Function of Two Nine-week Courses

1. Studies

Studies of student performance in English 1A (freshman composition) show an 11-14% difference between performance of initially qualified English 1A students and performance of post-remedial students: a greater number of post-remedial students (11-14% more) earn C's or better in English 1A than is true of initially qualified English 1A students despite differences in verbal ability. (See graph on first page.)

2. Application to Writing

We agree that students who can (with 70% accuracy or more) recognize errors on multiple-choice exams may not be able immediately to apply what they know to their own writing. We have found, however, that when composition teachers point out the necessity for editing, and when teachers teach students how to edit their own writing, the post-remedial students learn very quickly (within 2-3 weeks) how to correct such errors as sentence fragments, comma splice, dangling modifiers, etc. Furthermore, we have found that the post-remedial students understand and can apply the principles of subordination and coordination almost immediately when the means and the reasons for subordination are made clear. They know which words work as subordinating words and they know phrases; the application of that knowledge to their own ideas is simple for them.

Problems with carry-over from recognition of errors to avoiding such errors in writing arise when a teacher assumes that ability to recognize errors should automatically carry over to writing; application must be taught.

3. Purpose of English B

English B, we believe, is a good bridge-course between the large-group grammar course and freshman composition, especially for the "marginal" students who earn C grades in English A. We believe that students earning A's or B's in English A can be taught to apply what they know of grammar during the first 2-3 weeks of English 1A. The composition instructor does not need to explain what a fragment or dangling modifier is -- the "A" or "B" student has demonstrated that he himself can recognize such errors with 80-100% accuracy.

V. STAFFING

A. Work-load Credit for Large-group Instruction

Any instructor who teaches the large groups (200-365) is given double credit for the number of hours he spends in the classroom: e.g., English A, meeting four times weekly, is granted eight hours of classroom work-load credit. In addition, the large-group instructor is assisted by secretaries who handle all attendance and grade records. The secretaries are full-time classified staff.

On this basis, 4 sections @365 (1460 students) can constitute the equivalent of one full-time instructor. (A word of caution, however: unless the instructor maintains careful discipline with occasional monitoring assistance, in a group larger than 250, subdued conversation is sometimes difficult to control; conscientious students complain of distractions.)

B. Staffing Large-group and Small-group Sections

Large-group instruction is highly feasible if no writing is required for a grammar-spelling-punctuation review. However, if the large groups are sub-divided into "normal" small groups (@30), staffing of the second nine-weeks writing course poses a problem. We have handled staff scheduling in the following manner:

1. Large-group Sections (first nine weeks)

   Only one or two instructors teach the first nine-week large-group sections.

2. Small-group Sections (second nine weeks)

   Other English staff carry 12-14 hours in the classroom for the first nine weeks, but add one or two 2-hour classes the second nine weeks: e.g., an instructor may be scheduled with other classes for only 12-14 hours for the first nine weeks; he would then pick up one or two English B sections (each meeting two hours per week) for a total of 16 hours in the classroom the second nine weeks. His work-load therefore averages 15 hours per week over the entire semester.

3. Distribution of Students from Large-group Instruction

   Staff time is not saved by large-group instruction if all of the English A students enroll in English B small-group sections the second nine weeks. However, we have partially solved the problem in these ways:

   a. Approximately 60% of the large-group English A students earn C's or better and may progress to English B; the total number of students requiring small-group sections is thus reduced by at least 40%.

   b. We asked all English A students earning B's, C's and D's prior to the final exam in English A to take a supervised writing test "challenging" English B. Each writing sample (one paragraph) was read anonymously by English staff. When 2 of 3 readers indicated "Pass" on the writing sample, the student was exempted from English B. We have found that approximately half of the writing samples are marked "Pass" (48%).

      Our studies have shown that students exempted from English B by this means have performed with greater success (C's or better) in English 1A than have students who completed English B or than students who were initially qualified for English 1A (i.e., more of the "Pass" students earned C's or better in English 1A than was true of either of the other groups).

c. If A- and B-grade students are automatically exempted from the second nine-weeks writing course, and if C students who "Pass" the writing exam are exempted from the writing course, then we need to staff for only about 25% of the students originally enrolled in large-group sections. Sample statistics follow:

600 students initially enrolled in 2 large sections

360 (60%) students earned C's or better

120 (20%) students earned A's or B's

240 took challenge exam

115 (48%) "pass" exam

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125 of original 600 students need the writing course the second 9 weeks. (At 30 per section, these students can be scheduled into 4-5 sections, each section meeting only twice weekly.)

Should you wish more detail regarding our plans and/or studies, we shall be happy to provide it. We have changed the English Placement Test from the SCAT or ACT to a test of our own making. Our test takes 40 minutes to administer and covers the same material covered in the final exam for English A. The items have been refined by item analysis involving at least 1000 students.

We are planning to go to an audio-tutorial method of teaching English A beginning in the fall of 1969. Students will attend one large-group session per week and one small-group quiz session (1/2 hour) per week; they will be required to spend four hours per week in lab carrels using tapes, slides and a manual. Staffing needs will not be increased by the audio-tutorial method; the lab will be supervised by a full-time para-professional tutor.

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION